

Message Text

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71-62
ACTION EUR-12

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 451

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

ERDA GERMANTOWN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, PARM, GW

SUBJECT: PRESS INQUIRIES - INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT TO CONTROL
EXPORTS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY

REF: BONN 01826

1. REPRESENTATIVE PRESS COVERAGE AND INTEREST IN THE REPORTED
AGREEMENT AMONG CERTAIN SUPPLIER COUNTRIES TO CONTROL EXPORT
OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY IS REFLECTED IN REFTEL.

THIS IS IN SPITE OF FAIRLY ROUTINE COVERAGE IN THE PRESS OF
PAST MEETINGS IN LONDON WHICH INCLUDED THE NAMES OF THE
COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING. WHILE DETAILS OF THE MEETINGS WERE
FAIRLY WELL PROTECTED, THE GENERAL INTENT OF THE DISCUSSIONS
HAVE BEEN REPORTED. WHILE NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICIES AND

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PROLIFERATION HAVE BEEN RUNNING STORIES FOR SEVERAL MONTHS,

INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT IS HEIGHTENED BECAUSE THE PRESENT AGREEMENT IS SEEN IN CONTEXT OF US/EUROPEAN COMMERCIAL COMPETITION IN ADVANCE TECHNOLOGY SECTORS - RELATED TO WEAPONS TRADE AND US DECISION ON CONCORDE - AND BECAUSE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY IS ASSOCIATED IN SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WITH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND WORLD POSITION.

2. MISSION HAS RECEIVED POINTED INQUIRIES FROM THE AP AND MCGRAW-HILL REPRESENTATIVES IN BRUSSELS, SEEKING FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE AGREEMENT. CURRENT FOCUS IS ON ANY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RECENT ANNOUNCED CANCELLATION OF A REPROCESSING PLANT BY FRANCE FOR SOUTH KOREA AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A SIMILAR DECISION OCCURRING IN THE GERMAN-BRAZIL AGREEMENT.

3. IN ADDITION, THERE IS MUCH SPECULATION ABOUT JUST WHAT HAS BEEN AGREED TO IN TERMS OF LIMITING TRANSFER OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY AND WHETHER THE AGREEMENT WILL HOLD WHEN ANOTHER COMMERCIALY ATTRACTIVE DEAL PRESENTS ITSELF, SUCH AS BRAZIL. THERE IS ALSO SPECULATION ABOUT WHICH COUNTRIES WILL IN THE FUTURE BE INCLUDED IN THE LIST FOR WHICH LIMITATIONS WILL BE PLACED ON TRANSFER OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES AND WHETHER IT IS LIMITED TO ONLY CHEMICAL PROCESSING PLANTS AND ENRICHMENT PLANTS OR WILL ALSO INCLUDE NUCLEAR POWER REACTORS. A FURTHER SPECULATION IS THAT IEAEA IN VIENNA WAS SUBSTANTIALLY BEHIND THE MOVE BY SUPPLIER COUNTRIES TO REACH ITS AGREEMENT.

4. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF A MAJOR SALE OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT OR OTHER TYPE FACILITY IS BOUND TO RAISE AGAIN THE SAME QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW IT FITS WITHIN THE GUIDELINES AGREED TO BY THE SUPPLIER COUNTRIES. EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH MATTERS MAKES US SKEPTICAL CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE AGREEMENT TERMS WILL BE PRESERVED. IN ANY CASE, THE CONTENTS OF THE AGREEMENT AND THE POINTS IT DOES NOT DEFINE TIGHTLY WILL BE MORE OR LESS ACCURATELY DEDUCED AS SUPPLY CONTRACTS ARE MADE AND IMPLEMENTED. THERE WILL BE PUBLIC CONFUSION, DISAPPOINTMENT ON THE PART OF SOME, AND ACCUSATIONS OF BAD FAITH FROM OTHERS.

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5. WE RECOGNIZE THE SENSITIVITIES INVOLVED AND THAT THE US IS NOT IN A POSITION TO DECIDE UNILATERALLY ON PUBLICATION, IN WHOLE OR PART, OF THE AGREEMENT. IT STILL MAY BE WORTH SOME SPECIAL EFFORT TO PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO PUT SOME OF THE PRESS SPECULATION INTO PERSPECTIVE AND AVOID SOME OF THE ACCUSATIONS WHICH WILL BE DIRECTED AT THE FIRST COUNTRY MAKING THE NEXT MAJOR SALE OF A NUCLEAR FACILITY.

THE US WILL BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE IN LIGHT OF PAST
CRITICISM OF OUR BULLYING OTHER COUNTRIES INTO POLICIES
WHICH SERVE OUR COMMERCIAL INTERESTS. MORRIS

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